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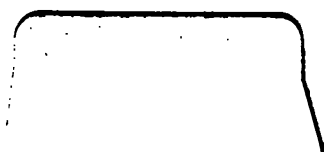
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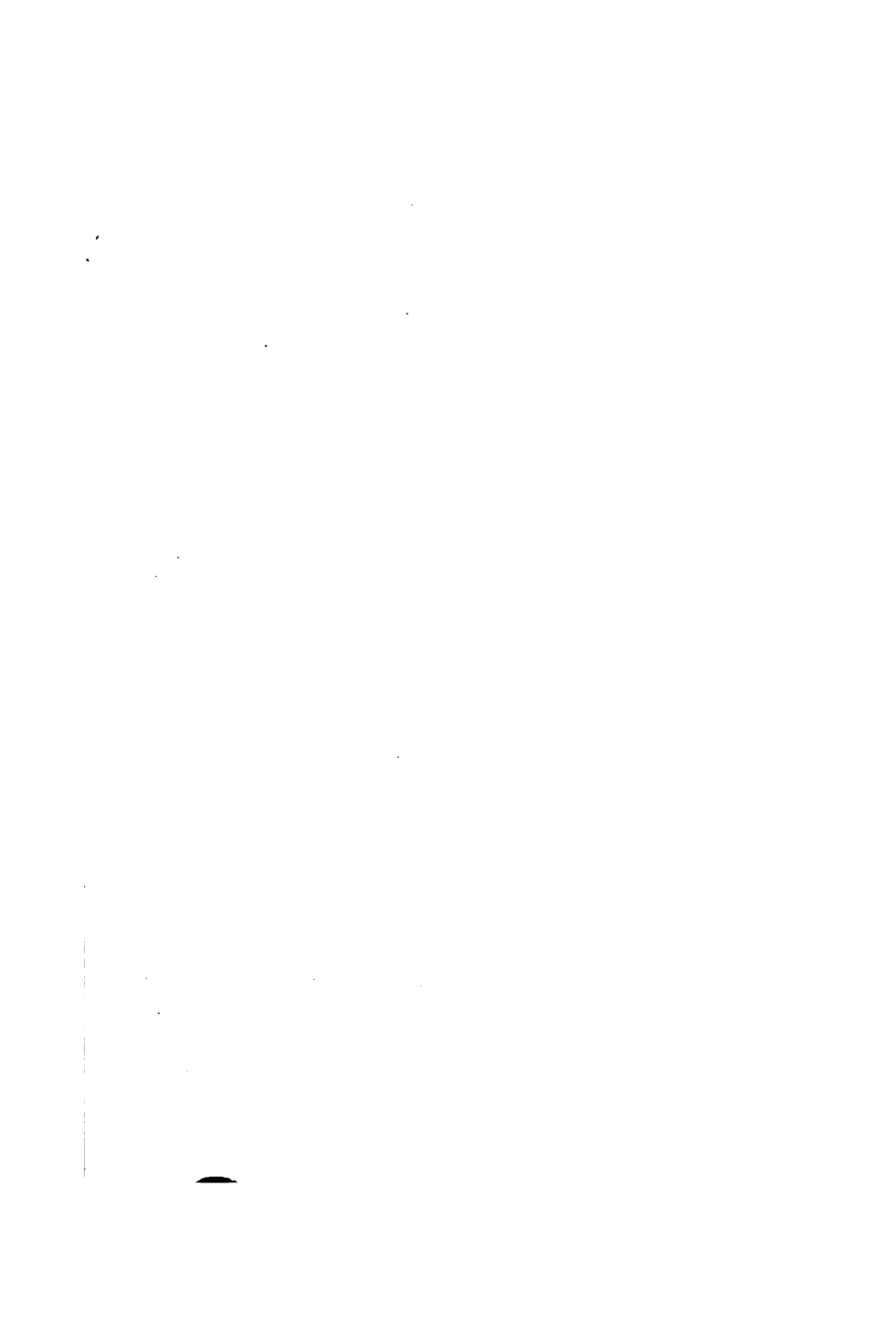


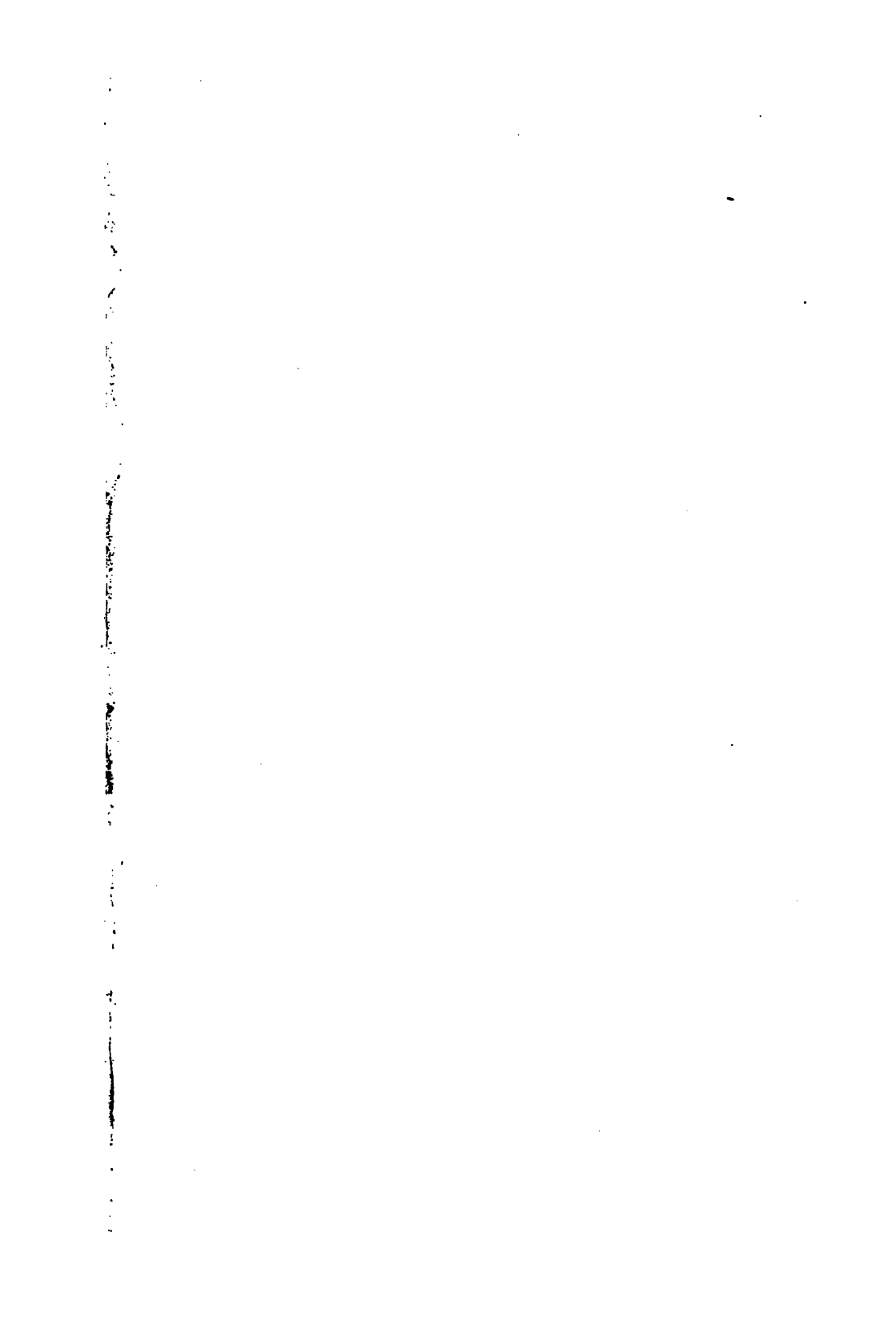
*The Confessions
of a Débutante*



Dec 1970
To Hilson
from Anita Rogers

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Scot





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THE CONFESSIONS OF A DÉBUTANTE

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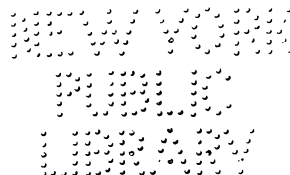
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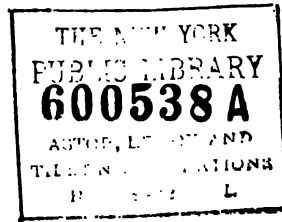
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1913

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Published October 1913

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To E. B. S.



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THE CONFESSIONS OF A DÉBUTANTE

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THE CONSULATE

PARIS

JULY 17, 19—



DEAREST AUNT JUDITH :—

I was so overwhelmed and excited by your letter when it came this morning at breakfast, that I kissed Harry instead of Papa, and then upset Mim's cup of coffee all over that morning dress of hers that Papa says looks as if it ought to be worn in the evening with a sash.

To think that I can have my coming out this winter just the same, only a great deal better, and to think that I am to live in your beautiful great house, and sweep down those gorgeous stairs to receive my swains ! It fairly takes my breath away.

We have talked it all over, and Papa says we have talked him all under. He says that clothes do not make the man, but ruin him, and that if there ever comes a time when tattooing is the rage he will welcome it with fervor. Harry mildly expressed the opinion that stranger things might happen, to judge by the recent successes of certain enterprising young women, whose classic dancing has been a positive revelation.

Mimsy, like the dear she is, solved at once the most important problem —

clothes! She insisted upon turning over to me her quarter's dividends, and I can hardly wait for Monday to come for the shops to open. Fancy little me dropping in at Worth's and casually ordering two gowns, and a winter suit!

You can see how much we said, for Papa has promised to engage my passage on the Olympia for September 28, and you know how slow he generally is in actually doing things.

If you are to be back in New York this year by the first of October, you will find me close upon your heels, for I am bound to arrive in time for the Harvard-Yale Football Game, if only to see Bob actually playing against the Elis. Do you know, I am almost afraid to start, with all this talk about duties. I am sure that no one will believe what I say, and I shall be so hectic that I don't believe I shall

know what I *do* say, so I suppose they will keep me shut up in the Customs-House, or wherever they put people with too many clothes, and too little money.

Mim says she is going to write you if the ink holds out, so perhaps I had better be charitable to her and to you as well. If you only knew how delighted I am, and how good I think you are! Well, perhaps I can make you see it some time in October, dear Aunt, and in the mean time think of the impatience of

Your loving niece,

PEGGY.

P.S. I declare I have forgotten every one! Uncle James, who is in for a long, miserable winter of stupid “affairs”; and dear old Judy, who must have put you all up to this plot, in order to show how much

(15)

she knows about society, after a whole year in its gay whirl. I love you all for it so very much that I can't half thank you.

S.S. OLYMPIA

OCTOBER 3, 19—



DEAREST MIMS : —

The Doctor says that we shall be in to-morrow, although it seems to me that we have hardly lost sight of Ireland! I don't wonder that you and Papa always prefer the slower boats, for on these big liners one no sooner gets used to the motion, finds agreeable fellow-passengers, and begins to

enjoy life than lo and behold it is all over. I feel that the best part of the voyage is lost. We have had head winds most of the way, but that does not seem to have made any great difference in our running time, and the motion has been slight, except for the vibration which I was conscious of for the first two days. The ship is a perfect beauty, the food is delicious and I eat twice as much of it as I should. It is great fun going up and down in the little elevators which Mrs. Brockton calls a refinement of torture, and which I must confess made me a little wobbly the first day out. But the people! You know I haven't been back for four whole years, and the conglomeration of Americans, Hebrews, and would-be English struck me at first as being like a comic opera. As a matter of fact there are a number of theatrical stars on board, but, curi-

ously enough, they are more like everyday people than a good many of the others. .

It was awfully nice having the Brocktons and Careys. I have been with Mrs. Brockton nearly every morning, and Gladys Carey has taken a turn with me now and then in the afternoon. You know they took the State suite, and she never comes on deck until luncheon. Yesterday we had tea in her stateroom, and it is really magnificent. I felt quite majestic, being served from the State service and by one of the English servants the Careys are bringing home with them. He is the most impressive butler I have ever seen. I suppose the impressive part of him costs extra. If it does n't, Mrs. Carey will be a disappointed woman. Gladys is awfully nice, but more conventional than any girl I know. Of course we went to school

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1. *Phragmites* (common)

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together, but that does not mean much in these days, and I never saw very much of her. But, oh, dear! how boresome tremendous wealth must be to people. Gladys can't keep up her interest in anyone or anything for more than half an hour, and then she must be prodded and amused by something, and the result is that she simply has to make fun of other people, and sometimes it's frightfully rude.

This afternoon, just after luncheon, as we were taking a stroll on the upper deck, it was rolling a bit and old Mr. Gaston—you know the Gaston of "Gaston and Wheeler"—lost his balance and sat down in a woman's lap. It happened that she was sleeping off what was probably a fairly sizable midday gorge. He knocked the bottom of her steamer chair down, and woke her up, and in doing so went per-

fectly flat. We walked by just then, and Gladys, looking down at him, said to me, "Is n't he killing?" so that every one tittered. I felt so sorry for him that I stopped and helped him up, and I have n't seen Gladys since. I suppose she thinks it was beneath my dignity to do such a thing. I don't care if she does, and I have had a very pleasant walk with him. He knows Father, and told me a lot about the Tariff troubles, and other things that I imagine bother Father a good deal, and he ended by introducing me to the Count de Rochfort, who seems to be the only Parisian on the steamer. I saw his name on the printed list, but I had no idea that he was the attractive, reserved stranger who spent most of his time on deck reading, and whom I had noticed on several occasions. He 's not at all like most of our French

friends in appearance, for he is tall, fair, and wears English-looking clothes, but in talking with him he has the same deferential manner that I think so charming, and reminds me so of the good old days in Paris, that I had my first real qualms about the new life.

He told me that this was his first visit to America, and he was very grateful to me for speaking in French. The Count is actually in business, and is coming over to study some of our tenement-house problems. It seems that his family owns quite a large amount of landed property both in Paris and Rouen, and he is trying to improve the conditions of the houses, and still keep them on a business basis,—that is, make money out of the rents. He has heard of some of our model tenements, and is going to study the whole question.



I was so interested in what he said, that I promised to go slumming with him some day. You remember our old Club in Ninth Street? It seemed to me just the place to take him. And, by the way, he knows the Charvois and the Duvals very well, and is related to the Count d'Arles. I think it is strange we have never met before. Mrs. Brockton has asked him to dine with us to-night. Freddie is coming too. I forgot to mention Freddie, but as a matter of fact he has spent all his time either in the smoking-room, or with one of those actresses, and he has only played shuffle-board once with me. I suppose he thinks I am still in school from the way he talks, as if we were playing the game of Twenty Questions.

Well, to-morrow we shall see the dear old Statue of Liberty looming up. Then

(25)

the tug of war at the Customs-House.
How I hate the thought! And then Aunt
Judith.

Love and kisses for you, Mimsy dear.
Write often to your one and only

PEGGY.

1012 FIFTH AVENUE

OCTOBER 10, 19—



MY DARLING MIMSY : —

Here I am and here have I been for five whole days without a single minute to devote to you. I suppose you received the cable Uncle James sent, and *Le Matin* must have given you news of the steamer's safe arrival. But still I should have written you, and would have done so had it not been for

the excitement of being whirled off to the Vanderbilt Cup Race almost before I had unpacked, and the weariness which followed on after.

You remember Gerald Winthrop, that breezy, jolly, good-looking boy who came over on a motor-trip last year, when we were at Cannes? It seems that Judy met him somewhere last week and told him I was expected, and the very day after I arrived he called and wanted us to go to the Vanderbilt Cup Race, the great automobile event of the year here. I was crazy to go, but Aunt Judith put her foot down. She said it was no place for girls; a barbarous custom; people getting killed and maimed for life; and that happening in the dead of night it was thoroughly indecent.

I thought that was all there was to it, and meekly said, "Yes, Aunt," and "No,

Aunt," just as they do in books. But it seems that Mr. Winthrop is not built that way, and the next afternoon he came and asked only for Aunt Judith. I don't know how he managed it, or what he said, but while we were having tea Auntie said that if we were set upon going to the race she would not interfere; and remarked that if I had come all the way from Paris to come out, I might just as well come out all over, and do it thoroughly; and as the motor-race would be talked about for days she supposed I had better have the satisfaction of joining my voice to the swelling chorus of motor-maniacs. And so I imagine Mr. Winthrop had been pleading that it was a necessary part of my education, and a rich source for society chit-chat. I was perfectly thrilled.

It was arranged that Judy and Jimmy

Vanderpool and the Chetworths were to be of the party, but Mr. Vanderpool begged off for some reason, and so Freddie Mason went instead, much to Judy's disgust. She says Freddie is simply a pale reflection of what Gerald could be if he tried, and that they both suffer from the comparison.

The spree began by our all dining at Sherry's and going to see "The Follies," where we sat in a box very near the stage. The music is very pretty, and some of it was funny, but the costumes were quite as shocking as in many of the French plays *jeunes filles* are not supposed to see. However, it was very good fun, and one or two of the songs were very catching. Later on in the car we sang them many times, Gerald getting a perfectly fine tenor part, and Freddie Mason imitating a bass viol, — in fact his voice sounded more like some

uncouth instrument than like anything human.

After the theatre we went to the upper room at the Knickerbocker Hotel, which is a very lively restaurant, where we regaled ourselves by gazing at the "demi-blondes" and "demi-johns," as Gerald called them.

It is not at all like Paris, at least the Paris that I know, but I rather think that the people here think it is, and are proud of it, for some reason or other. Personally, I think it very exciting and novel, but I do hope that I am just a bit more attractive than the girls I saw about me. We had a delicious supper, which we did not at all need, and champagne, which the men needed still less, and we stayed and stayed, the orchestra playing those delicious American "rag-times" and every one sing-

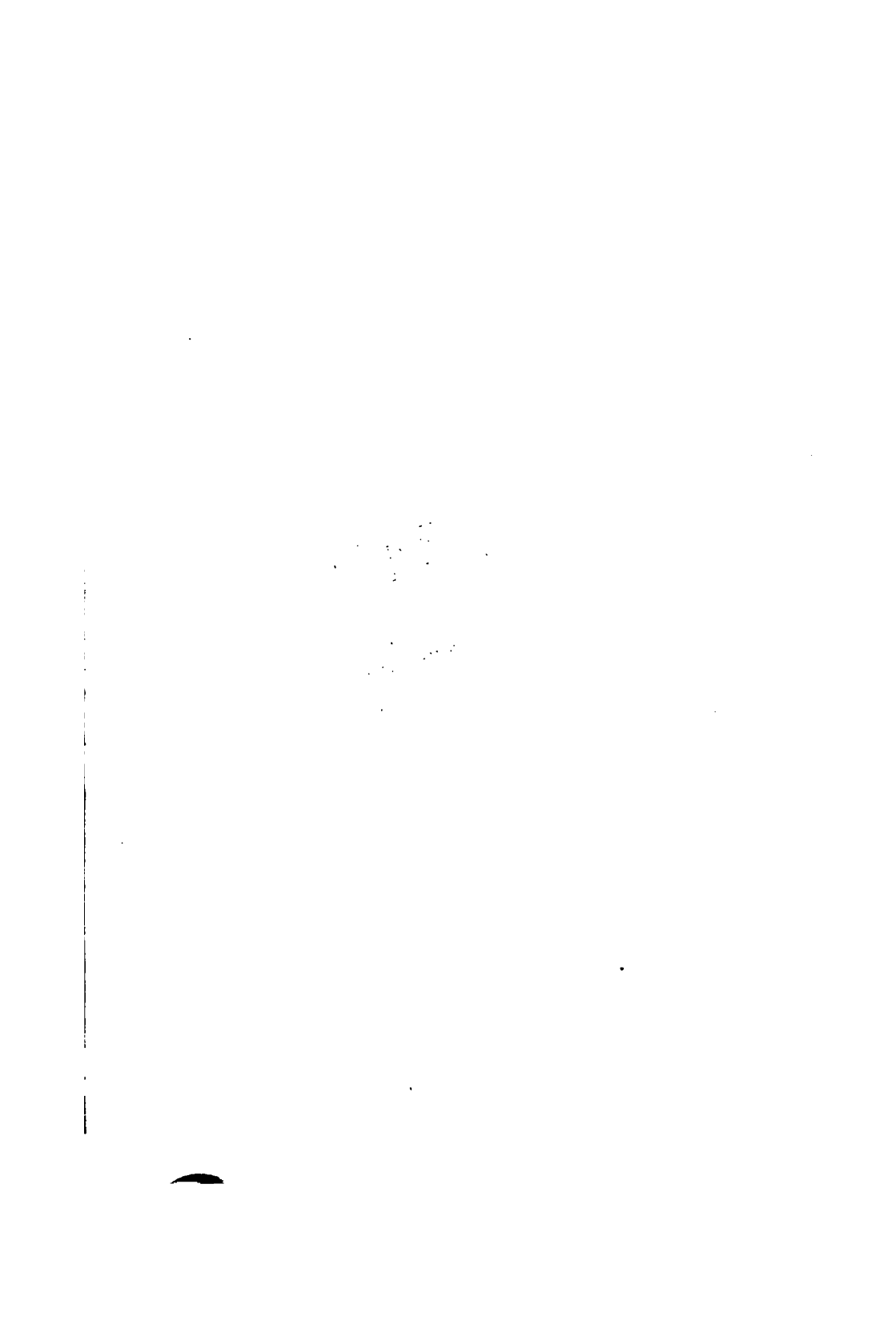
ing them, until the Chetworths said they thought it time to dress and start for Long Island, so we hurried home (we always seem to hurry) and bundled up, and at half-past three in the morning, if you will believe it, we started off, Gerald driving the car, a perfect beauty, and I on the seat beside him; the rest cozily lounging in the tonneau and his chauffeur on a little side seat they use here for this purpose.

Luckily it was not so very cold, and it was thrilling to find the road all filled with cars, all going the same way, and all traveling pretty fast. Gerald and Freddie Mason had a game which became very expensive for Freddie in the end, which was that Gerald would pay Freddie twenty-five cents every time another car passed us; while Freddie was to pay the same every time we passed one. This encour-

aged Gerald to drive so fast that it frightened me, and I insisted that he slow down, so that by the time we reached the course Freddie was way ahead on the game. But Gerald had his revenge by driving past car after car which had come to a halt at the side of the road, and Freddie had to beg for mercy before Gerald would stop and back into place.

Then came a long chilly wait, which we managed to while away with hot coffee and all sorts of delicacies produced by Stebbins, Gerald's man, from a large teabasket, interspersed with peanuts, popcorn, "hot dogs," — horrid sausages partially done up in great rolls of bread, — and in fact everything that the street vendors brought along, for Gerald insisted that Freddie pay up his debt by buying from all the peddlers.





The scene was one I shall never forget, for there were cars as far as one could see in the dimness of the night, with the glare of thousands of lights, shedding their rays as if trying to outshine each other ; and the figures of people coming and going gave a weird effect of unreality. A good many people “ had all they needed in the way of wine,” Freddie remarked, and to judge from the hubbub I suppose he was right ; why there were not more accidents I can only ascribe to the generosity of the gods. As it grew lighter the crowd and the excitement became greater, until finally some of the contestants appeared on the course, and cheering began.

I can't tell you how fearfully exciting it was when they at last started, coming near our corner every few seconds, one after the other, going like lightning, with a roar and

dust, and followed by cheers from the onlookers. The turning of our corner was perfectly frightful, and it seemed at times as if some of the cars would go over right into the crowd. But I am thankful to say that nothing happened where we were. It was only after the race was over that we learned that one man was killed at another part of the track, and it took all the fun out of it, for me at least. I suppose any great game is dangerous, and the danger is part of the sport, but an actual accident brings it home to one, and I know that all of us felt that the race was a failure. And Gerald said that only fools and those commercially interested would stand for this sort of thing, unless the course was laid out to minimize the danger, both to the drivers and to the onlookers. For it seems that the accident was due to the fact that

the corner was so crowded that there was not room for the poor man to turn without running into somebody.

We motored back very comfortably, stopping at the Grosvenors', who have a beautiful place near Garden City, to tidy up a bit and refresh ourselves, and reached home in time for lunch. Then Judy and I crawled into bed and I have been there ever since. Do you wonder ?

In reading over this scrawl of a letter, I notice I said the Chetworths were going with us, but did not mention them afterwards. Of course they were with us all the time, but Gerald is such a talker, and was so inquisitive about my life in Paris, that I really had hardly a moment to myself. And what with Gerald and his banter, and Freddie, who always came out at the little end of the horn, I really hardly said

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Boo to the Chetworths. But I don't think they minded. In fact Mr. Chetworth said that he was only hired to be seen and not heard. I am awfully glad I went, and I can't tell you how glad I am that it's all over.

With love,

PEGGY.

1012 FIFTH AVE.

NOVEMBER 15, 19—



Rc
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MY DARLING MIM : —

It's all over but the shouting. I am properly tagged and exhibited as specimen "P" in this year's row of Buds, and oh! how I do hope that I shall not blossom into a wall flower when turned to the rays of the electric lights at the Pollards' dance next month, for theirs is the first real ball of the year.

The tea was perfect, — at least that part which concerned Aunt Judith. I had no idea what a lot of real work has to be put into society play. Of course Aunt Judith knows just how to do it. She is wonderful! Miss Park, her secretary, Auntie and I spent a whole week in going over the card list of people we know; revising and adding and taking out and all that, and then after we had finished I suddenly remembered Gerald. Think of forgetting him. Why, I nearly died on the spot. And then I did n't dare to tell Aunt Judith, for I knew she would joke about it at dinner; so I waited until they had left the room and made out the card myself.

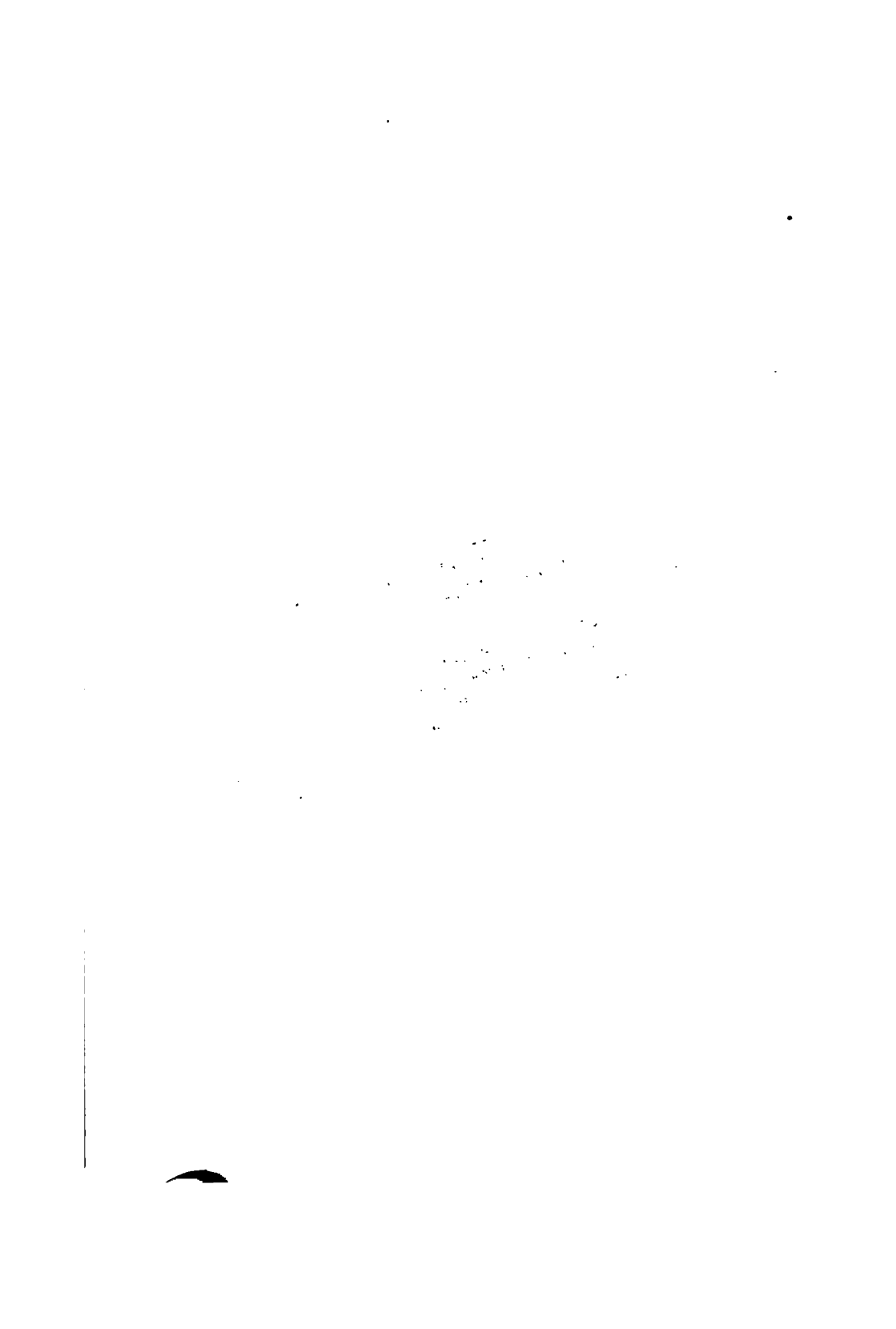
Countless decorators and awning-men and caterers arrived this morning at an outrageously early hour and took possession of the premises, much to the dis-

gust of Patton, the old butler, — whom Aunt Judy has kept on — out of the goodness of her heart. When I came downstairs at half-past four the house was a bower of beauty, as I said to Bob. “A Bower *for* Beauty, you mean,” he retorted. What silly things men say when they get into frock coats. Did you ever notice it?

Well, then it began, and I don’t believe I ever talked so much, and said so little, in my life. I can’t begin to tell you who came. It seemed to me every one I ever knew, and twice as many more. You remember the Harry Johnsons, whom we met at Nice? They popped into my head in the middle of the night. I was always remembering people, at the oddest moments, that I used to know. Well, I sent a card to them, as I supposed, and forgot to tell Aunt Judith that I had done so. Imagine my surprise

when he appeared with a perfectly new wife, whom I had never seen before, and *our* Mrs. Johnson came as Mrs. Archie Van Dyne, as pretty and charming as ever. Auntie was rather shocked to have brought them together under her roof. Poor dear Mrs. Van Blow sent a magnificent box of American Beauts, with such a sweet card. Of course her whole family are out of it for the season. Is n't it a shame! There were a good many other flowers. Even the Count sent roses. How kind people are about such things! But of all the flowers, you should have seen Gerald's violets! "All wool and a yard wide," as Harry would say, for the box contained a bale of wool, and in the middle the biggest bunch of violets I ever expect to see. I simply could not hold it. But John brought a little table to my side, and I was able to pat it occasion-





ally. Was n't it sweet of him? Gerald, I mean.

Some of these days I am going to tell you what people told me about you and Papa, and how nice it was to hear so many people wishing you could be with us. Don't you suppose I wished it too, Mim, dear? It was the only blot on the day.

Well, dear, it's time to dress for Warfield in his new play. Bob and Judy and Gerald and I are going quietly to talk it all over. We knew we could not do it at home, and Gerald thought the theatre was just the place, so we are off. Strew my love wisely upon the family, and heap it upon yourself.

PEGGY.

THE PRISCILLA CLUB

NOVEMBER 26, 19—



DEAREST MIMSY:—

While I am waiting here for Gladys I must write you about Saturday's game and the spree we had going to New Haven. I told you Gerald asked me to go down with him in the club car, and Aunt Judith said it was all right to go if I liked Gerald. Of course I like him; I never thought anything

else about him but that I liked him very much, and I never suspected that he any more than liked me, but I imagine Aunt Judith knew, and that was why she spoke as she did. Well, I am getting ahead of my story.

The special car was great fun. The Roberts, Gladys and Jimmy Vanderpool, the Griffins, Polly and Vivian Strong and about ten other couples all went, and we had such a good lunch served in little boxes. I suspect the men had a bar or something in the smoking-compartment, for there was a good deal of shouting and cheering long before we thought much about the game.

Of course most of the cars on the train carried Yale sympathizers, while ours was a blaze of crimson, and the men seemed to think that a procession through the train

would be a good plan, to give the others an idea that there was such a place as Harvard. At any rate, they left us for some time, and I am sure they convinced the other people that this was Harvard's Day, for we could hear them singing continually.

When we reached New Haven, you never saw such a mob in all your life. It was like *Le Grand Prix*, only so American, so much more explosive and strenuous. I wish the Count could have been with us, he would have appreciated the difference so keenly. There were a great many men who aimlessly jostled through the crowds, simply for the enjoyment of pushing about. They were just in a hurry for the fun of the thing; all excited, boisterous, and happy.

Gerald telephoned ahead for a motor, so we swept past the crowd and got into our seats ahead of the majority, who came sur-

ging in and filling up the enormous stands until they were solid black and blue on one side and black and crimson on the other. I have never seen so many pretty girls in my life. They must come from far and near. Gerald says it is the most sporty crowd in the country.

When the teams came running on to the field, the din was perfectly terrific and the bands were playing wildly, each trying to drown the other out, while every one arose and waved banners and hats. I picked out Bob at once, although it is hard to distinguish the men when they get on their football togs. Gerald pointed out Charlie Blake and Foxy Chalmers and Captain Holt of the Harvard team, and I never felt so nervous and excited. When the whistle blew and the game began, we lost all thought of everything except that ball, and when it darted

out from the pile of men, and Bob picked it up and ran behind the goal posts for a touchdown, I thought I was going to have a palpitation. You never heard such pandemonium, and an old gentleman next me slapped me on the back by mistake, and then apologized to me for the next five minutes.

Of course you have seen by the papers that Harvard won, but you have no idea, from the score, how close and exciting the game actually was. I always thought that fox terriers had a sort of superhuman passion for balls, but the way Bob and Captain Holt followed that football would have shamed the cleverest fox terrier out of existence.

When it was all over and the undergraduates had given vent to their joy by whirling like dervishes about the field, casting their hats in the air and howling as if demented,

Gerald suggested that we walk back to get up our circulations, and so we did; and here's where the rest of my story comes in, for Gerald, after the first pleasure of victory wore off, became quite solemn. In fact, I began to try to make conversation, until I saw that something was coming, and then I simply could n't. After we had walked along for I should think ten minutes, Gerald said, "I can't keep it back, Peggy, any longer. I've got to tell you, right here in the street, that I love you. I don't know what you will think, and I don't know what you will say, but if you could only say that you will marry me, dear heart, we'll motor back to New York together and get away from this beastly crowd, and have just ourselves,—just ourselves forever." And then he stopped, and left me tottering along beside him to answer.

I was perfectly dumbfounded. Why, Mimsy, dear, I might just as well have expected Timmins to propose. I've known Gerald always, it seemed to me, and I had n't the slightest idea that he felt any differently toward me than when I went away. Gerald is so amusing generally that at first I thought he must be joking, but I could tell he was n't, and when he looked at me for his answer I just gulped.

Finally I suppose I said, "This is so sudden," or something of the kind, for Gerald said that instead of being sudden it had been permanent ever since he could remember, and that he had tried to get me alone ever since I came back, and that I must have known it because I had evaded him so skillfully, which made me a little mad. And then I told him how absurd it was to spoil a lifelong friendship, and that

I did not love any man enough to marry him, and had no idea of marrying anyway for a long time; and I thanked him for the honor he had done me, — for I suppose it is a great honor, with all his millions, or rather his family's, — and then we had a perfectly awful walk to the train, and I did not see how I could stand it all the way to New York. But Gerald is nice, and he said, just before we boarded the train, that we must not look as if anything had happened, and that he hoped he had not spoilt our friendship, and he also said that my refusal made no difference to him at all. He said he was going to keep on trying, and keep on loving, and something about drops of water beating down on a stone somewhere; and then we got there.

Gerald stayed in the smoking-car all the way, and when he left me at home he said,

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“May I come and see you as I always have?”
And of course I said, “Please do.” Was
that wrong of

Your loving

PEGGY ?

1012 FIFTH AVENUE

DECEMBER 3, 19—



MIMS, DARLING : —

How can I suggest to you my feelings of elation, and the delights of last night, and the depression of this morning as I sit up here in my room at twelve, having just finished breakfast, and drooping over my desk in my endeavor to give you first of all my impressions of my first ball.

It was a great stroke of luck for me to come out the same year as Emily Pollard, for of course there are few families who have a house as large as theirs for such a brilliant affair, and I suppose hardly any one, except the Castles, and possibly the Barton-Dabneys, can stir up such a ferment of social excitement.

Aunt Judith insisted upon giving a dinner, although I was asked to two others before our cards were out, and so we heavily entertained the Harry Chetworths, Gladys (I can see you smile) and Jimmy Vanderpool (smile again), the Stronges, Beth Penrose, and, a happy afterthought, the Count de Rochefort d'Olympia; and Auntie insisted upon Gerald, for some unknown reason.

We dined at eight-thirty and Gerald was late and apologized by saying that a mat-

ter of business came up which detained him. Did you ever hear of anything so absurd? I thought I might as well burst upon the scene in my Worth gown, and Aunt Judith prophesied victory immediate and complete ; and really Gerald must have some ability or foresight, for his orchids fitted in most harmoniously with the general landscape. Aunt Judith insisted upon my wearing her own pearl necklace, and the diamond crescent which Uncle Jim gave me on my coming-out marked the boundary of my dress. Judy and I had a little difference of opinion when the hairdresser came, but Aunt Judith was on my side and I did it in my old way, the way you like it, Dear One, and the only change I made was to fasten the smallest aigrette I could find at Tiffany's where it could wave in freedom, — and

even that, I think, is rather silly for a girl of eighteen.

The dinner went off finely. Uncle Jim was at his best, and told Mrs. Strong, if the winter succeeded as well as the first month promised, that he should bring out Aunt Judith all over again next season. I sat between Gerald and the Count, and what with making dates with Gerald for motor-trips up the Hudson, and appointments with the Count for the closer study of the poor, my winter will be gone before I know it. Gerald says the poor are with us always, so what's the use of treating them as if they were here on a visit; while the Count suggests that, as the Hudson is probably prettier in the spring, I would do better to postpone "escapades" in the country until he has left. Really he is quite a match for Gerald, and I think Gerald felt





that the Count was one up at the end of the dinner, for by request I spoke French a good part of the time. I think Gerald ought to have been grateful, for it gave him an opportunity of satisfying that ample appetite of his.

Well, we got on to the Pollards' soon after eleven, and I never even imagined such a scene. The whole ballroom was decorated as a baronial hall of old. Perhaps it is always that way, but besides the exquisite tapestries, with ancient weapons and historical paintings on the walls, were great garlands of fruits and vegetables. Vivian told me that this was the way they did it in the old days when the knights gave great banquets.

The music was perfect, a great band at one end of the room and a Hungarian orchestra at the other played the most deli-

cious waltzes you ever danced to. Of course they did not play together, Mimsy mine, but one after the other all through the evening.

Jimmy Vanderpool had called across the table at dinner, asking me for the first dance, and knowing how little he really cared for dancing, I thought it sweet of him, but Gerald says he only did it to plague him ; and when I asked him if his business had prevented him from asking me first he had a fit of the sulks. Really, men are too silly for words. I suppose I did make him feel a bit offish, for when he finally asked me for supper, and I had promised the Count in French, he said he merely feared I might be left without a partner, and did n't want me to be stuck, which I call very nice.

Truly, Mims dear, I did n't stop for a

minute all the evening, and Captain Holt and Bob were on for the dance, and a lot of other Harvard men, all of whom Bob insisted upon introducing to me, for fear Yale would win on account of superior numbers, he said. And so I danced and danced, until this morning my poor bones are hardly able to support what is left of me.

The Count has been a great surprise, for you know how quiet I told you he was. Well, he has awakened as if from a trance. It seems that he had letters to the Pollards, the Vanderpools, and others, and I imagine he must be well known, for he is asked everywhere, and he seems thoroughly to enjoy the life here. On the steamer you know he told me merely of his work, but last night he would not hear of his old tenements, and insisted that I tell him

what I thought of it here, now that I am back, and whether I like it as well as Paris.

Really, supping with him in one of the little grape arbors of the supper-room, with real grapes dangling down, and soft music in the distance, and his delicious French accent, made me feel as if I might be anywhere but on Fifth Avenue, until I caught sight of Gerald telling one of his stories to a table of laughing girls, which brought me back home. I wonder which I do like best.

Poor Aunt Judith finally came to me about four, and said that she could not keep her eyes open a moment longer, and so we left after one more dance. Gerald insisted on the last one. He said that was always the best.

I had a perfect time, and how I wish I

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could have another brand new Worth for
next Wednesday. This one is a sight.

Lovingly,

PEG.

DECEMBER 25th.



MERRY CHRISTMAS! dearest Mimsy, and happy New Years for all time to you and Papa. My last letter to you was really my Christmas letter, and I hope that it reached you to-day, for this is the first time we have ever been separated on Christmas Day, and I suspect that the blue feeling which took possession of me this morning,

in spite of Uncle James's present of a turquoise ring surrounded with diamonds (think of it!), may be repeated in our little home in the rue de la Pompe.

I have found out a good many things about Christmas this year that I never knew before. In the first place, the richer you are, the more of a "chore" Christmas becomes. Aunt Judith considers it a sort of business, and after she has made out her list, she buys and buys, without reference to what people want, until it comes to the immediate family, and then she says it is perfectly impossible to find anything that she wants to give them. Both she and Uncle James said that this was their happiest Christmas for years, because I was such an easy person to please. But I think their pose is somewhat forced, for Aunt Judith was genuinely pleased with the

parasol which I brought over with me, you remember, and Uncle James was delighted with the Lafayette engraving. I'm so glad. It took away the sting which I have felt ever since I paid such a frightful duty on it. Of course I could only give the rest of the family "duddy" things, but they seemed just as happy. All my own presents were clothes, for I have had practically nothing for three months, and here in New York the girls are having things all the time. I was woefully scant on furs, as you know, so Aunt Judith gave me a wonderful set of fox, and dear old Bob a great big shaggy coon coat, — a perfect love of a thing for motoring, with a little cap to match. Judy gave me the sweetest little gold purse you can imagine, and several of the girls, Gladys and Ellen, sent me their pictures all framed in silver, with


both our initials engraved. Was n't it sweet of them!

I don't know what I shall do with Gerald. He insists on sending me violets every single day, and this morning a great box of roses came from him, with an envelope tied with an enormous bow, and in the envelope an exquisite pin, sapphires and diamonds. I don't know what to do about it. Of course I must send it back, but it will be just like him to call and insist that I return the flowers or keep the pin, for he says I am not consistent, and really I don't know that I am. He is so amusing at times that I forget how serious the whole thing is.

Last night it was rather poky, for Christmas Eve is no time for sane people to be about, according to Uncle James, and as there was no tree to trim and all the presents were delivered by the servants,

we had nothing to do but read. You know Aunt Judith never will let a night pass without reading the "Post." She says it has the nicest deaths of any paper, and so, as I was rather sleepy and tired, — but I forgot to tell you what I did all day.

You know the Count has been asking me ever since the Pollards' dance to go slumming, and as I had finished all Christmasing, we had a date for yesterday. He called for me in a taxi, but I told him that I always walked when I went slumming, it made me feel in a more plebeian mood, and so we trudged down to Seventh Street, all the way, mind you, and when we arrived at the Cooper Club I was amazed to find it absolutely changed. Of course I remembered that a new building had been started, but from the begging letters we used to receive nearly every week, I had





imagined that they were rather short of funds and I expected to find a modest structure. But on the contrary, it is huge, and run just like any fairly good hotel, to judge from appearances. Lots of clerks, and nice-looking people attending to callers, and reading-rooms well lighted; and I suppose well ventilated, although I did notice a little of that "unmistakable" that used to be so pungent in the old days. I asked for Mr. Billings, and we went into his office, and then were taken all over the building. The Count said that there were more conveniences in this one building than in all the houses of Rouen put together, and asked how much it would cost him for the season, which amused Mr. Billings very much.

After we came out, the Count declared that our visit was a great disappointment to him, for he did not consider it slum-

ming at all, and would I come over on the East Side with him. And so we strolled along until we reached a block in what I always thought was the Jewish Quarter, but which seemed occupied entirely by the French, and O! what squalor! We went into several of the houses. The Count apparently knew all the people, and they were overjoyed to see him, and, indeed, he was charming with them. As I spoke French, they took me for his wife, I suppose, and called me Madame, which was rather trying at times. One woman, whose husband is a waiter at the St. Denis Hotel, said she had not seen him for five weeks, and had given up all hope of his ever coming back. She had four children, all little tots, and they hardly had enough to cover their backs, no food and no money for the rent. The Count is going to do

something, and left some money with her, and on our way home we left word with Mr. Billings to notify the district clerk, or whoever attends to that section, to look up Mr. Waiter and call him to account.

I suppose I may as well make the confession that we stopped at the dearest little French café on one of the side streets near Lafayette Place for tea, and how nice it seemed to be back in France, for it did actually seem so in every way, except, dearest Mims, that it would have been so utterly impossible for me to spend an afternoon with him like that anywhere but in America! Well, Deary, that's why I was tired last night, — that and Gerald's meeting us on Fifth Avenue on our way home.

Lovingly yours,

PEGGY.

1012 FIFTH AVENUE

JANUARY 4, 19—



DEAR DARLING MIMSY:—

I have been cooped up here ever since New Year's with one of my silly colds and I am afraid I can lay it to a little New Year's party that Judy, Bob, and Gerald and I indulged in. We had not planned for anything, but Gerald called me up to say that he had a sore throat and needed a change,

and wondered whether we were game for seeing the New Year in via Broadway. Of course I was, and so was Bob. Judy, although she said it was tame tagging along without a beau, refused to be left at home. Aunt Judith was rather opposed to the idea, but finally, as long as it was almost a family party, consented, provided we would keep her and Uncle James in countenance at dinner. We started in by going to the theater. The play was quiet enough, — John Drew's hardy perennial, Gerald said, — but afterwards we really made a complete round of the cafés, where every one was in the highest spirits and loudest voice. I never heard so much noise before.

The cabaret performances at some of the cafés are highly diverting. There are songs and dances and often old favorites

from the comic operas are sung, every one joining in the choruses, much to their own enjoyment, very genial and very noisy. It is quite foreign and awfully jolly, but just a bit *risqué*. I hardly think the American people know how to take this sort of foreign innovation. We were at Louis Martin's when the clock struck twelve. The lights were turned out for a moment, and then, with a blaze of light, a shriek of whistles, and a Babel of voices, completely drowning out the music, the New Year was welcomed. Confetti had been passed about, and the people sitting at various tables pelted each other playfully and drank toasts with anybody whose eye they could catch, and some couples even went so far as to kiss, — perfectly horrid in public, I thought.

We left soon after, much to Gerald's

disappointment, for he said the evening was just beginning with the New Year. However, we were not through with our adventures, for Bob insisted that we walk home just to see the crowds, and his method of returning to the house was to walk down one side of Broadway and up the other, and it was another hour before we were deposited at the front door. We all enjoyed it, though, every one was so gay. The streets were crowded with jostling merry-makers throwing confetti, singing, and walking arm in arm. All classes alike and every one carried away by the spirit of the occasion. But that walk and my thin slippers and thinner stockings are the cause of my wretched cold.

I must tell you of one dreadful thing which happened a few days ago, — yes—

terday, in fact, although it seems longer. While I was up here imprisoned in my room, the Count called upon Uncle James and offered himself with all due ceremony. I did not know about it until later when Aunt Judith came up and told me, and acknowledged how sorry both she and Uncle James felt about it. Of course they knew that I was not in love with him and of course I'm not, although he is such a charmer. I wonder if I should be if it were not for Gerald.

Uncle James told him that in this country it is to the girl herself that suitors must declare themselves, but that in this case he would bear the message, and I thought it very tactful of him. Both he and Aunt Judith admire the Count very much and sympathize in his disappointment. I have written him the nicest letter

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I could, and I have explained that I would have seen him had I not been ill. Mimsy dear, I was astounded and I have not recovered yet. He was so nice and dignified about it all, and this afternoon I had a box of violets from him with his card, "*Toujours à toi.*" I wonder what Gerald would say. I shall not tell him it is all over—it is just as well that he should not know it.

With love from

Your worldly daughter,

PEGGY.



1012 FIFTH AVENUE

FEBRUARY 26, 19—

MY DARLING MIMS : —

You must not be too alarmed when I tell you that I feel as if I had been beaten from head to foot, and that I never was so thoroughly tired out in my whole life as I am to-day, for the cause is simply that I went to the Ashleys' house-party in the Adirondacks over Washington's Birthday.

Notwithstanding my pitiable plight, I had a perfectly wonderful time, and I owe it to Gerald that I did not have a serious mishap.

You know all winter Dick Ashley has been talking about the famous week-ends that they have at his family's camp and at the Watsons'. I told him that I was tired of hearing about those everlasting spreees, and not to mention them again in my presence without producing an invitation. It came last week from Mrs. Ashley, who said that, inasmuch as it was quite in my honor, I might ask the guests, which I think was splendid of her. Of course I told Judy, and together we asked Gladys and Jimmy, Beth Penrose, Anita van Vleit, Bob and Gerald. The Count staggered me by writing that Mrs. Ashley had invited him to join the party and begged that I allow him the

pleasure of coming. That it was entirely in my hands, that he was sailing the following Wednesday, and that he promised not to refer in any way to a matter which he reluctantly admitted to be settled. Of course I wrote him to come by all means.

They all accepted, but Gerald said he would not go if the Count was to be taken up there like a French poodle. He says that I have him on a chain, and that he never sees me except when the poodle is begging for something. What a foolish boy, and so silly about it and me! I must confess that I was a little bit foolish myself, for I mentioned the old proverb, "Love me, love my dog," and he said he would come, and, moreover, that he would pat the beast just to please me. Little did he know what had happened.

We had a very genial time on the train


going up, — a good deal of “auction” and much planning for Gladys and Jimmy to do things by their lonesomes. I am morally sure that they are engaged, and Judy promised to find out while we were up there, —rash creature!

We got off at a little mountain station, with the thermometer way down in its boots, and piled into a great sleigh that Dick had built for the purpose, with a van on behind for the baggage, and three great seats draped in fur. Six horses, and dozens of bells, which sounded so sweetly in the calm white stillness. It was so long since I had been away from city pavements that I breathed in the air until I ached with the chill of it.

One of the great joys of the country is the power it has of freeing the most city-fied of convention, and every one, even

Gladys, sang and chattered the whole of the long ten miles to the camp.

And here I must confess to sudden and complete disappointment; for when we drove up to the delicious-looking log house I thought we were going back to the primitive. But once inside, the house was as comfortable and luxurious as anything you have ever seen, — even to private baths, and radiators in the bedrooms, much to my disgust. I think I must have a bit of the sturdy Puritan in my make-up, for I was looking forward to roughing it. However, after dinner, before the crackling logs in the enormous fireplace I thawed out, and even became so bold as to sing “Bon jour, Suzon,” which was greeted by cheers, which were redoubled when the Count politely asked Gerald if he would felicitate the occasion



by reciting a poem. Gerald, after much urging, gave "Casey at the Bat" in his inimitable way. Rochefort, never having seen a ball game and knowing nothing of American slang was much mystified, and so the rest of us enjoyed it all the more. Then followed a veritable vaudeville, with Gladys as a *première danseuse* to cap the climax.

I shall never forget the following day, —the temperature below zero, and neither a breath of air stirring nor a cloud to be seen. We bundled up to our eyes and sallied forth to try the new toboggan slide. Gerald wanted to go down first with me, and I agreed. Really, Mamma, I never was so frightened in my life! To begin with, we started off going like the wind, down and up, on and off the ground, flying, sliding, bouncing, with the snow stinging my face and blinding my eyes and my breath all

going out and none coming in to take its place.

We must have gone some distance when Gerald shouted to me to lean sideways; and then suddenly he took me in his arms and pulled me off the toboggan, and we went bouncing, rolling in the snow for some distance, and finally collapsed in a heap. Gerald was serious for the first time since he proposed to me, and said that it was the closest shave he had ever had; for it seems that if he had not pulled me off when he did, we should have gone straight into a tree that I had never even seen, and it might have severely injured us both, and especially me, for I was in front. Dick said that the slope was not right; and before the rest went down the place was repaired.


I felt a bit shaky about trying it again,



but after the others had gone down safely a number of times, and as Gerald said that it meant more to him than anything else in this world and both the others, I consented, and now I am simply crazy over it.

In the afternoon we went snowshoeing; not very far as the crow flies, but miles measured in ounces and pounds of effort. The Count was screamingly funny, for every time he stepped he lifted his foot the way a cat will when its feet are tied up, and down would go one foot on the other, to his complete undoing. A dignified man in an undignified position is one of the most pathetic sights imaginable, but he was such a good sport about it that we all felt sorry for him and kept pace with him on the long walk home. However, he had his revenge the next morning on the pond; for he is the most

graceful skater I ever saw, and all the girls were crazy to skate with him. You know how little I have been on the ice during the last few years, and yet with him, I soon got back into form again and was able to do the outer edge fairly well. The Count showed me how to waltz, and it was only after a divine turn about the lake that we discovered that the others had left us all alone. On the walk home he expressed his sorrow at the pain he had inflicted upon me last month. Never a word about himself or the disappointment which—and I do not mean to flatter myself, Mims mine—I am sure he suffered. He is a perfect dear, and for some reason I felt no hesitation in talking frankly to him, telling him how sorry I was and confiding in him about Gerald. No one could have been more sympathetic.



So now you will not wonder at my physical condition, and when I say that Gerald went all over the eternal question again last night when I was dropping off to sleep, you can see that I am also mentally afflicted.

There is one little confession I must make, Mimsy dear. I was so sleepy, or the night was so pretty, or I was so comfortable after my hard day of exercise, that I found out that Gerald was holding my hand, and he kissed it good-night. But, then, that does n't count, does it, dear?

With love,

PEGGY.

1012 FIFTH AVENUE

MARCH 11, 19—




MY DEAREST MIMSY:—

Life is very busy nowadays for a little débutante and its ways are continually a surprise to unsophisticated Peggy. Saturday, for example, was a shock! Aunt Judith was so much distressed, and said that it was all her fault for not warning me, and wanted of course to reimburse me,

but equally of course I did not let her. However, let me tell you all about it.

Two weeks or more ago I had a card from Milicent Manning requesting the pleasure of my company at luncheon on the 9th, "auction" in small letters in the corner of the card. I was rather doubtful about going, because I never knew Milicent particularly well at school, but I chanced to see her that night at the opera and she said "Of course you are coming on the 9th"—and I murmured feebly, "Of course," not being able to think of any reason why I should not go, and so the die was cast and I accepted the invitation. Well, the luncheon was very grand. There were twenty-four of us there, all "buds," of course. The table was covered with lilies of the valley and maiden-hair ferns and we all had white orchids to

wear. The gold service was at its most resplendent. Every delicacy in and out of season was put before us. Then we all sat down for a game of auction. I suppose that it was simple of me, Mims dear, but I had forgotten—if I ever knew—that so many of the girls play for money. They all take it as a matter of course, and would have been tremendously surprised to know that I had never been so “sporty” before. Some one did murmur something about a cent, but I was playing with Millicent’s skye terrier at the time,—he is such a love,—and in a vague sort of way I connected scent with Gertrude, who affects Mary Garden perfume at \$12 an ounce, and overdoes it at times in my humble opinion, so I played blithely on, doubling and going back. One no-trump cost me 500 points. Well, do you know, dearest,





not until I saw Alice take out her purse and heard her say, "I suppose that I shall be bankrupt," did I realize what I had been doing. Then I had that horrid sick feeling one has when going up the steps to the dentist. I had visions of pawning my clothes and selling the lovely bracelets and things Uncle Jim showers upon me. It was a terrible moment of suspense as Edith made up the score. I came off better than I deserved. I lost forty-two dollars and some of the girls owe so much more. I confided it all to Gerald, who happened to be passing as I came out of the house. He was most sympathetic and offered me fifty dollars on the spot for my orchids, and said they would be cheap at that.

The next morning at breakfast, at which for some unknown reason both Judy and

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I appeared, Uncle James remarked that the Count was sailing on La Fontaine at ten-thirty. He said it so pointedly that I wondered whether I had said good-bye to my French admirer, and realized I had n't. I knew that the Count had purposely refrained from coming to bid his adieux, and I was quite sure that after he had sailed we should receive his cards; but suddenly it occurred to me that it would be a kind thing to wish him a bon voyage, and so I suggested to Aunt Judith that if she had nothing special to do, we might journey to the dock and wave our farewell. Both she and Uncle James jumped at the idea and both declared they would go. The Count had made a deep impression upon them and they were glad of the chance to show him this courtesy.

Accordingly we motored down to the

dock, and Uncle James found the Count in his stateroom. He was so touched at our coming that the tears welled up in his eyes.

I asked him to call upon you, dear, and he promised to do so, and after talking with the others for a few moments he came and asked if he could show me the upper deck. When we had left Uncle James and Aunt, he said he realized that "Monsieur Gerald" was deeply attached to me and that his observations led him to think that perhaps his attentions were favored. If so he hoped that I would accept his sincere wishes for my happiness, for both of us in fact, and that he would always count himself fortunate in having had my friendship to look back upon. And then the whistle blew and we hurried down and, with a farewell, left the ship.

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If Gerald should ever say another word
against dear Count de Rochefort again, I
shall tell him he has a lot to learn in the
noble art of being a gentleman.

As ever thine,

PEGGY.



ARNHEIM
CASTLE NECK, N.Y.
April 3, 19—

DEAREST MIMS : —

We came up here quite suddenly, and oh, I am so glad. The March winds and my *vagaires*, to put it in Uncle James's words, were too much for Aunt Judy and her attack of La Grippe. Uncle James decided it was best to open Arnheim for the season, and so Friday we left the gay life

which has been such fun all winter and now here we are at the dear old place which I always thought the ideal home. Everything is just the same. Aunt Judy is forever fussing about the New York house, doing over rooms and changing the furniture, and Uncle James whenever he buys a new painting has to shift all the others about to make room. Out here the living-room is just as we left it over four years ago.

The cool grays and greens in the foliage paper have not faded at all. The great and-irons stand guard as impressively as before. The little basin of water for "Béranger" still spells Dog as correctly as ever, and the delicious leather-tipped fender is just as comfortable to perch upon for tea after an invigorating walk. I love it, every inch of it, and I can't see why Judy should be so cold to its welcome.

Jenkins, the old coachman, is quite feeble, although he still drives, and Uncle James says that he will have been in the family fifty years in October, which means a good deal here in this country nowadays. He never comes to town, as the motors do all the work ; but up here they are rarely used except when some of the family have time to motor down to the city, and I am glad of it. The very first afternoon I had “ Mikado ” out in the runabout and drove over to Garrison and back, and it seems so good to have the reins in my hands once more.

Aunt Judy has given me the green room overlooking the river on the corner, with the great bathroom with a fireplace in it, and really, if you could have seen me in unmentionable attire stretched out before the blaze last night, you would have

thought me the laziest, most luxurious of my sex.

We decided, for Aunt Judy's sake, that we would not have any guests for at least two weeks ; but Saturday morning (and knowing this perfectly well), what did Gerald do but call her up on the telephone to ask if he could come out on Sunday for dinner ! Of course, had he called me, I should have said no, but the dear had not the heart, and suggested he had better come for Sunday, which was just what he was angling for.

We were all out when he arrived, all purposely, — the family for my sake, I am quite sure, and I — well, for discipline. When I came in from a rather petulant drive there he was reading George Ade's latest book of Fables, — as if he did not know enough American slang already, — and so far gone as to be utterly oblivious

to my appearance until I reminded him gently that he was sitting, even lolling, in the presence of a lady. Ever since he has insisted on calling me “Lolly”; rather cunning it sounds, too.

We had a jolly evening, — no bridge, nothing but banter which Uncle James loves when he is feeling spry; and we retired early as a part of our family compact.

Sunday turned out to be a superb day with cloudless sky and champagne in the air, — just the day for a walk, and as Gerald suggested that we go over to Stuyvesant Hill, we started out bravely and made the four miles in no time. Gerald was silent most of the time and I felt that way myself.

When we reached the top and gazed over the wide panorama of river and hill and valley, with the toy buildings, it seemed too beautiful to waste time upon

speech, and it was then that Gerald exploded. I suppose it always comes suddenly, but Gerald is the most surprising person.

“This has got to stop,” was all that he said.

“What has?” I asked him.

“I have been in love with you, loving you harder every minute since you landed”; and I was wicked enough to ask him if it was *that* which was going to stop. It was rather rash of me, I expect, for he said he knew I had been playing with him too long already, and that the time had come when no more evasions would be accepted; and then it began, and, dear Mimsy, it has been such a day and Gerald is such a dear and I don’t know whether we are engaged or not, but some things which took place led me to feel that we must be.

One thing I hope you will give me credit for. (It is so hard not having you here.) I told Gerald that, before anything could be decided, he must give me six months to think it over, and that during that time he must work, for I did not approve of marrying a man who had no occupation.

When we came back I am sure Aunt Judy knew about it, and I suspect that the invitation was given Gerald with the knowledge of what was going to happen. Uncle James was splendid, keeping up the conversation during dinner and making us laugh very loud and often.

When Gerald left, I am quite sure we were engaged. Oh, Mimsy, write soon.

PEGGY.



1012 FIFTH AVENUE

MAY 4, 19—

DARLING MIMSY: —

You can't imagine what an exciting time we have had the last few days. Gladys and Jimmy are engaged, and the formal announcement was made on Monday, preceded by an informal one by the *New York Chronicle*, that dreadful paper which harps upon the misdeeds of the rich to the

intense enjoyment, apparently, of the middle classes, to judge from its great success. The Sunday edition had a full-page illustrated by photographs of Gladys and Jimmy, the Careys' town house and "The Eyries," where we all passed the weekend a short time ago. The description of Gladys was perfectly hideous, hinting at her summer in France hunting for a title and raking up that dreadful affair which her father had with that opera-singer years ago, which even I remember. Jimmy was passed by with the simple statement that as yet Wall Street had not noticed his presence there, although he had the honor of having his name upon the door of one of the most illustrious firms of that neighborhood.

Of course, I called on Monday afternoon and found every one there. It was no end

of fun, for we all had been sure that they were engaged, and to have it finally announced was a great relief. Gladys was beaming, and I have never seen any one so ridiculously solemn as Jimmy. He took every word said to him as gospel truth, and when Freddie said, "Many happy returns of the day," he never saw it at all. Gerald told him to buck up, and that the real funeral would take place at the church, and asked him if he had selected his pallbearers yet. But nothing could shake Jimmy from contemplating the serious side of matrimony and the responsibilities of great wealth.

Gladys had perfectly wonderful gifts and thousands of flowers. All her relatives gave her jewels,—a diamond pendant, a diamond-studded watch and chain, an exquisite pearl and diamond brooch, and a num-



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ber of other smaller things, — and Jimmy's ring was a master stroke, — three enormous diamonds, nothing else, and even the setting hidden by the stones themselves. I suspect that Gladys herself had a hand in it.

But, oh, Mimsy dear, the afternoon was not without its trials to me, for Mrs. Chetworth, beaming as she always does on every one, whispered to me, “You next, dear,” and Mrs. Brockton in her kind but ponderous fashion stopped me to hope that she should be able to congratulate me before long. Oh dear, as she was speaking I could see that a number of people were thinking the same. I sometimes feel that the six months' trial is a trial, indeed, and yet I am not sure of myself, quite sure; I wish I were, for I would end it this minute if I could. Gerald

is so good about it, and yet I really think it is worse for him than for me. He tells me he has given up going to his club because he hates it, is tired of hearing stories, and has forgotten how to tell one, which is not true, for he is full of them. He is really working, for Mr. Ashley told me himself the other day that Gerald was a factor in the office and he felt as if he could go off at any time and leave Gerald in charge without anxiety. Wasn't that nice of him? I repeated it to Gerald and he roared.

Of course we walked home together, a little silently, but never a whimper until we reached the house, when Gerald burst out with "To think of that lumbering mass of humanity getting ahead of me." "Think of what he has left behind, dear," I answered, and whisked through the door.

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I almost said something else. Oh Mimsy, I
don't know my own mind.

Your own

PEGGY.

ROCKYLEDGE

NEWPORT

JULY 25, 19—



DEAREST MIMSY: —

Back from our wonderful Cruise on the Verona, but perhaps I did not tell you that we were going. It was all so hectic that I scarcely knew we were off. As you know, the Careys have a huge steam yacht, the Verona, and the day before the annual New York Yacht Club Cruise, Gladys asked


quite a number of us, the old crowd, as we call ourselves. The Chetworths, Jimmy Vanderpool, of course, Judy, Polly and Vivian and the rest, including Gerald — ten of us to go all the way to Bar Harbor. Think of it! They have never followed the fleet beyond Martha's Vineyard before, but Mr. Carey has put through some deal, so Gerald says, and wanted to blow off steam, and I fancy he blew off a goodly quantity of very expensive steam during that ten days.

I wish you could have seen the yacht; she is a perfect beauty; as large as some of the cruisers in the harbor and beautifully equipped in every detail. We all had separate staterooms and a number of the girls brought their maids. I have no idea how many there were in the crew, but sailors and officers seemed to be everywhere on deck. The food was a dream.

Fortunately the weather was fine and but little sea, but, for all that, Judy was prostrated for nearly two days, much to her chagrin and my discomfort, for she nearly took my head off, she was so cross, and of course I had to spend a good part of my time with her.

The life on board was ideal. All through the days we were following the racers, and the picture of the beautiful schooners and sloops, with all sail set chasing each other along, is something to remember. Each afternoon late we would anchor, and then there would be visiting and dinners and dances. It was a naval fête under heavenly conditions.

Bob raced his own sloop, the Sinopah, but he has not done very well. This is his first long cruise, and the fellows he asked came in expectation, I imagine, of a





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real spree with no hard work, and so I think he has been somewhat disappointed. Gerald was awfully nice and sailed with him one morning, and I think, with his knowledge of boats, helped a good deal. I was rather glad he went, because the crowd have been making fun of us and making matters a little awkward. In fact, as soon as we came on board, Gladys insisted upon conducting us to a quiet corner on deck, where two steamer chairs had been placed side by side, with rugs neatly folded upon them, and hung over the back were two signs lettered "Peggy" and "Gerald," while tacked up at the entrance of this cozy nook was a larger sign which read, "Stop, Look, Listen Before Passing." Wasn't it horrid of her? But what was much worse was to find her sitting there one night with Jimmy, just when we

wanted it most. They are the spooniest couple I ever saw. It is quite sickening, and I don't see why they do not hurry up and get married.

I must tell you of a killing dance that seems to be coming into fashion here, adapted from something that is danced on the stage and called "The Turkey Trot." There is a man in New York who has been dancing it at one of the shows and in some of the cafés late at night, and it is a sort of one-step danced to the ragtime music that is played everywhere, and it is really very catching. It is a round dance just like the waltz, only the men hold the girls much tighter and both sway from side to side with the music. Aunt Judith says it is perfectly disgusting, and really it does look a bit vulgar, but when one dances, it becomes infectious, and "everybody's doing

it," as the song says. Gerald dances it awfully well. I don't see where he learned to do it, but he does not seem to want me to dance it with any one else, so of course I do. There is an electric piano on the yacht, and so every night we have a try, and Jimmy Vanderpool, who has taken lessons, teaches us all sorts of steps.

But you must not think we danced all through the cruise. Indeed, we did almost everything. At Islesboro we spent a whole day on shore, lunching with the Griffins, who have what they call a cottage which really is larger than the Islesboro Inn. It seemed so funny playing tennis. My head swam with the motion of the boat. Then at Bar Harbor, of course, the Brocktons insisted upon every one spending the day with them, and as I had never been on the island before, Gerald and I were presented

with a runabout for a drive, and we went over to Northeast Harbor and back. Is n't it a lovely place, dear, and so much more beautiful than one imagines! Somehow or other I had only heard of the social side of Bar Harbor, The Pool and the Kebo Valley Links; but the scenery is wonderful, the air like ozone, and the sky as fine as Italy. The drive was perfect, except that Gerald seems to worry about fixing dates and things. Oh, Mims dear, I wish you were here so that I could talk and talk to you and hear your dear wise voice in reply.

I think I must see you, and from the way in which Aunt Judith looks at times, I feel sure that she, too, would like you to shoulder some of the responsibility that both of us here avoid. What shall I do, dear; shall I come to you and father? It is for you to say; or shall I wait for you to

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come to me? Gerald suggests that you
come over here so that he, too, can see
you. I wonder if that is his reason.

With love and longing for you,

PEGGY.

ROCKYLEDGE

NEWPORT

AUGUST 15, 19—




DEAR MIMS: —

It is a curious thing to see how very few people really enjoy life in this lovely spot, and I am convinced that what America most needs is a thorough rest from all social activity. Society is a strenuous business here, and certainly an unprofitable one to those who consider it a life work. Don't

you think I write as a socialist or an octogenarian? It certainly sounds so, and I believe that, had I come here at once instead of having a "tremendous winter" in New York, I should have enjoyed it to the uttermost, and furthermore, had Gerald and I not been so very busy with each other, matters might have seemed more cheerful. But as it is, the continual round of dinners during the really oppressive weather has no attraction for me, and the only society event which I have enjoyed has been the tennis. The play has been remarkable. I have never seen such wonderful players except the Dohertys when they were at Nice. You remember that years ago. It was the only thing I was allowed to see the whole time we were there. What a naughty child I must have been, and how long ago it seems.

Gerald and I have been out sailing very often, — in fact, whenever he can come down from New York. I confess that I have felt rather sorry I asked him to go to work until the summer was over, for it has been lonely without him, and it has served him as a perfect excuse for asking me to cut short his period of trial. After all, it is silly for him to be in the hot city earning only his car fare and lunches when he can't spend his income; but Uncle James thinks it fine, and Aunt Judy is completely won over by it. But, oh dear! it is such a trial to him with his own friends. Jimmy Vanderpool says that the girl who wants more money than Gerald has already got is the coldest proposition he ever met. Of course they all know it is I, and they think we are engaged now, which makes it all the harder. But, after all, the principle of





work is right, and the giving up and suffering for each other is the normal course love should take, and we are going to stick to the agreement.

I must confess to you I am disappointed in the life here. The fast way in which people live savors, to my mind, of immorality. Of course there is more freedom in summer life always, but I was not prepared to have many of the people I have known and liked all winter become such tremendous flirts. The actions of two married couples, whose names I will not mention, have been unconventional, to say the least. It is horrid to know about it, and to see and to meet them as we all do constantly. It is strange how very much worse it seems to me than the scandals we sometimes hear of in Paris.

The whole life is quite depressing, and

I made up my mind yesterday to ask Aunt Judith if I could go up to Northeast Harbor next week for a little visit. You know the Chetworths have a cottage there. Mrs. Chetworth is so sensible and sympathetic that I am sure she will keep me from being lonely without Gerald. And by the time I return, the family will be back at Arnheim on the dear old Hudson.

Did I tell you of Gerald's present to me? He had been in business for two whole months, and out of his earnings (with a little more besides) he bought me the most exquisite opal brooch I have ever seen, a perfect screamer. He said that it took all his mental faculties and physical strength not to have it made into a ring. Was n't that sweet of him?

Your loving

PEGGY.



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P.S. Both Aunt Judith and I are awaiting your final decision with great anxiety, dearest. If you could only persuade papa to come with you, then I should feel more like urging you to come to us rather than for me to go to you. When you really make up your mind, do please send us a cable; it will help so.

P.



ROCKYLEDGE

NEWPORT

SEPTEMBER 2, 19—

DARLING MOTHER:—

Your cable overjoyed us one and all. To think of you as being with us in three short weeks, although they are bound to be long ones waiting for you, dear, seems too good to be true. Aunt Judith says she can already feel the weight of responsibility slipping off, but Uncle James remarked

that he thought Auntie would have two girls on her hands instead of one. Apparently, dearest one, you were a sly puss in your day, according to him. I am going to find out all about it one of these days. I have my suspicions, from what he has let drop occasionally, that you and he had a little affair in bygone times.

Gerald says he is planning to take two photographers to the dock, and is going to kiss you as you come down the gangplank if only to prove to society in general and to you in particular that he is determined to be recognized as a member of the family.

Freddie has been spending the weekend here, and it has been very trying for all of us, especially for me. He asked himself, and of course we had to have him. He wrote Aunt Judith that the fishing was

very poor in New York, and that he should like to get back to work, and as all his business associates were in Newport, coming to her was the only way to do it. Poor Freddie came apparently prepared to say something important to me. It was so evident that by Sunday we had to tell him of our engagement, which came as quite a surprise to him, although I should think he might have guessed it long before this. He is really a dear, and after wishing us all the joys of love in a cottage declared that he must get back to the fishing-grounds and promptly left that night. I have an idea that jokers and people who seem to make light of everything are *au fond* quite the reverse. I did not think of it until he said good-bye, but somehow or other I wished some one could have gone along with him to New York, for I know

that the journey back was a hard one for him.

Naturally enough, the frivolities of the season have begun to pall, and if it were not for appearances' sake, I should stay at home these first fall days. Gerald insists upon working, inasmuch as he can't be with me all the time, and so he is in New York the greater part of the week and comes back on Fridays. He is crazy to have the engagement announced and so am I, dearest mother, just as soon as you think wise. And we both feel strongly that the unfortunate episode with Freddie makes it imperative.

What deep joy it gives to a girl to love and to be loved by a fine man, and Gerald is one of the finest. What a sense of security it gives. After all I have seen in the last few months, I can't be suffi-

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ciently grateful for this happiness, with its vision of a brighter future, secure and permanent. Oh, that it *may* be permanent and everlasting, and may you join in this happiness of your little daughter who still loves you so much.

I very much fear that this last letter of mine is a stupid one for you, but to-night my mind is full of Gerald and of our future and of the joy which your coming will bring to two who will be waiting eagerly for you on the dock.

Your daughter,

PEGGY.



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